The Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) to aid teachers and students in keeping abreast of geography behind current news events.

GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

of

The National Geographic Society

WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

The National Geographic Society is a non-profit educational and scientific Society established for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion.

VOLUME XXVIII — April 3, 1950 — NUMBER 25

1. Spain Is Europe's Second-Highest Land Murphy - Gray
2. Australia Suggests Boomerang for Olympics Hoopes
3. Blockade Stifles Shanghai, Built on Trade Murphy-Gray
4. King Cotton Follows Pioneer Trail West Patterson-Atwater
5. Syria-Lebanon Customs Union Breaks Down Aikman - Gray

BECAUSE OF EASTER VACATION, THERE WILL BE NO BULLETINS ON APRIL 10. NEXT ISSUE WILL BE APRIL 17

LUIS MARDEN

A FARMER SMILINGLY SWAPS EGGS FOR MONEY AT A ROADSIDE IN SPAIN (Bulletin No. 1)

Bulletin No. 1, April 3, 1950

Spain Is Europe's Second-Highest Land

AFTER more than a decade of word-and-picture reporting of the countries of Spanish America, Luis Marden now has turned his attention to Spain itself. A member of the National Geographic Society's foreign editorial staff, Mr. Marden has contributed "Speaking of Spain," lead article in the April, 1950, issue of the Magazine.

"After Switzerland," Marden writes, "Spain's tumbled terrain averages highest above sea level in Europe. It has an average height of 2,000 feet, and nearly everywhere rises directly from the sea . . . But I was impressed by Spain's people (illustration, cover) even more than by the rugged beauty."

North and South Differ

There now are 28,000,000 Spaniards residing in a land about two-thirds as big as Texas. Those who live on inland plateaus know extremes of climate, but, for the most part, Spain's coasts are as temperate as the French Riviera. This is true though the north coast is on the same line of latitude as Portland, Maine. In the south, in the latitude of Virginia, Spain becomes as tropical as Mediterranean Africa.

Moisture is plentiful in the north. Fruit trees tint the coastal regions with bright blossoms and bear good yields of apples, pears, and cherries. Garden and field crops do well. Along the Mediterranean, irrigation takes the place of rain to create a rich coastal belt.

The artificial fertility of Mediterranean Spain began more than 1,000 years ago when the conquering Moors brought from Africa the orange and the mulberry and the "know how" to make a desert bloom. Moorish agriculture, centered in the areas between Córdoba and Sevilla, is still practiced though the last Moors were driven out of Spain in 1492.

The Valencia and Murcia regions are known for oranges. The Valencia coast also produces lemons, almonds, and hazelnuts. Málaga's countryside is patterned with endless vineyards. Jaén Province glistens with 32,000,000 silver-green olive trees. It produces one-fourth of the country's olive oil, a product in which Spain leads the world.

Meseta Is Inland

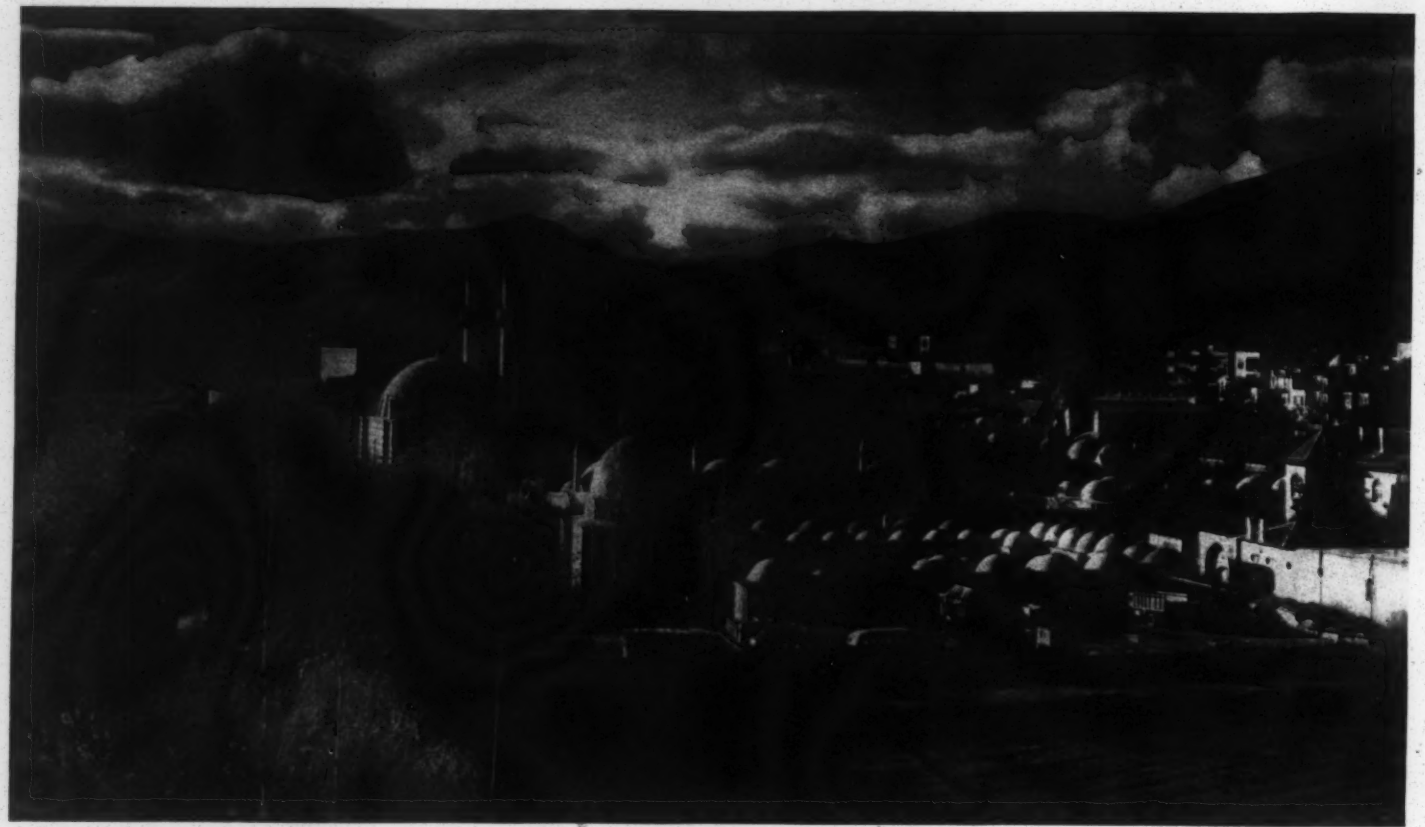
Silk culture, based on mulberry leaves, is widespread in the Mediterranean area. Cork oak yields its light bark every nine or ten years. The palms of Elche bear tons of dates. Cordovan leather originated in Córdoba. Jerez de la Frontera, near Cadiz, gave its name to, and still produces, sherry. Rice flourishes in the flat region outside Valencia.

Farther inland lies the high, dry, and windy Meseta, comprising three-fourths of Spain. Its grudging soil and harsh climate have kept all big cities but Madrid, the capital, on or near the coast. It grows grain crops and supports millions of sheep, goats, pigs, and donkeys.

The somber wind-swept upland of La Mancha, south of Madrid, was the home of Don Quixote, Spain's fictional hero. The great creaking wind-

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER APRIL 27, 1943, POST OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C., UNDER ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.
COPYRIGHT, 1950, BY THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY. INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT SECURED. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
SUBSCRIPTION TWENTY-FIVE CENTS FOR THIRTY WEEKLY ISSUES DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR. IN CANADA FIFTY CENTS.

UMI



MAYNARD OWEN WILLIAMS

ONCE CALLED "A PEARL LYING IN A CUP OF EMERALDS," DAMASCUS IS A BLOOMING OASIS OF THE SYRIAN DESERT

From a distance, the trees, gardens, graceful minarets, and gleaming buildings make many a follower of the Prophet think of paradise. Western travelers notice the narrow, crooked streets and gloomy houses. The beauty of the homes is indoors; the richer ones have marble courts, shrubbery, and running fountains. Tekkiye Mosque points two minarets skyward. Newer portions of this capital city of Syria (Bulletin No. 5) climb the slope at the right.

Bulletin No. 2, April 3, 1950

Australia Suggests Boomerang for Olympics

BOOMERANG throwing, suggested as a worthy Olympic Games contest by Australians anticipating the 1956 Olympiad in Melbourne, is both pastime and livelihood to its greatest exponents, the aborigines of Australia (illustration, next page).

Primitive "abo" tribes are scattered widely over the island continent. In general, they know nothing of plowing and planting, and live from day to day on what nature offers ready made. Tribes on fringes of deserts sustain life on the barest minimum of moisture and food.

Boomerang Types Vary

Their way of life makes them good hunters. Their catch ranges from kangaroos to snakes, lizards, birds, and fish. Roots and grasses, eggs, nuts, fruits, honey, honey ants, and white wood grubs supplement their diet. The spear and boomerang are weapons of the eternal food hunt.

There are native tribes—in the north, for example—that have never seen a boomerang. Others are very skillful with it and make models of varying weight, size, and shape for warfare, for hunting game birds and animals, and for plain amusement.

The heaviest boomerangs are used in fighting. Curved only slightly, they are thrown at fairly close range and are the non-returning type. Some measure nearly four feet long. With somewhat smaller ones, skilled abos can deal their quarry a knockout blow at 100 yards. A throw of 180 yards recorded at a demonstration in England suggests what might be expected of Olympic athletes trained for a boomerang-throwing event.

Boomerangs designed to return to the thrower are more sharply bent. Used to some extent to knock down birds in flight, they now serve principally as a form of recreation. Whirling in helicopter style, they may describe three or four full circles before completing their flight. They come back to injure the thrower often enough to give the word boomerang its popular meaning of damage by backfire.

Bend Is Natural or Forced

As evidence of the skill boomerang throwers acquire, Australia reports a William Tell act performed before charity-benefit audiences by a champion thrower of 40 years' experience. Balancing an apple on his head, he throws the boomerang, remaining perfectly still as the weapon circles and returns, knocking the apple off.

Boomerangs are fashioned from various hardwoods in the green state. Some tribesmen bend the green wood over a bed of hot coals. More often, they carefully choose the bend of a root or branch so that the weapon can be carved along the curving wood grain without additional bending.

Specimens hewn with the primitive stone ax have become rare and are much sought by museums. Carved, fluted, and painted designs interest collectors. Many have one end shaped as a throwing handle.

Throwing sticks were a favored weapon of the early Egyptians. They employed captive live decoys to lure wild waterfowl, and threw their

UMI

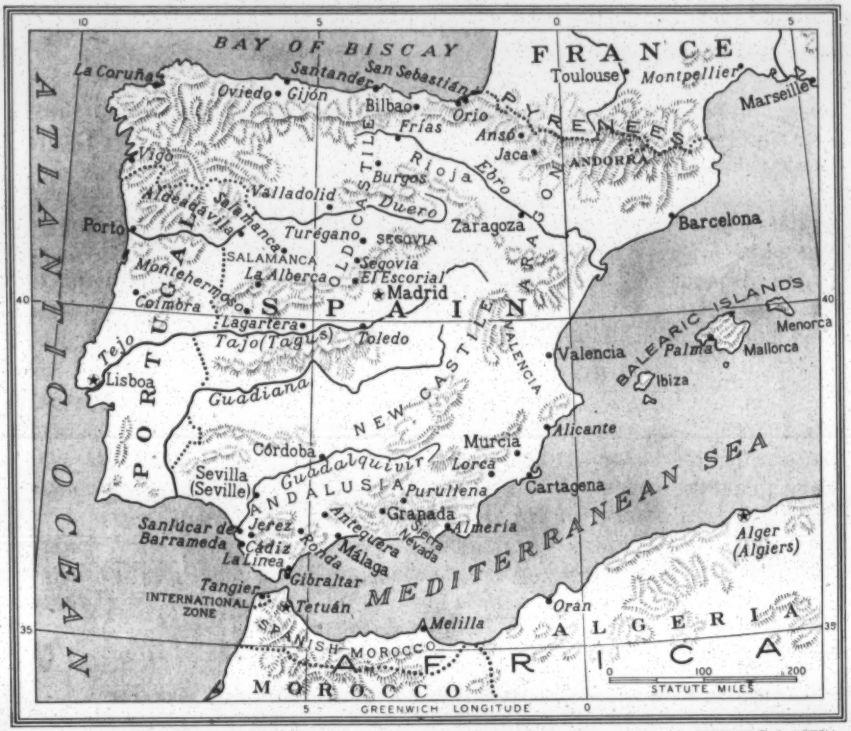
mills which he charged, thinking them menacing giants, still turn. But power-driven mills in the cities are replacing them.

In a metal-hungry world, Spain is a well-stocked treasure land. It was to the ancients what Peru and Mexico became to the Spanish Conquistadores. The Phoenicians mined copper in Spain, and the Romans took mercury. The mercury mine at Almadén is still the world's richest. Wolfram (tungsten) deposits attracted attention during World War II. Manganese, iron, potash, copper, lead, tin, and zinc are other metals.

Fishermen take tuna, cod, and sardines from the seas. The ranking commercial ports are Barcelona, Bilbao, Cadiz, Málaga, Cartagena, Valencia, and Vigo. Despite Spain's few good harbors, it has bred great seafarers. At the middle of the 16th century Spain ruled a colonial empire that by papal edict embraced half the world. Now its overseas possessions have dwindled to relatively small territories in Africa, plus the Canary and Balearic island groups.

NOTE: Spain is shown on the National Geographic Society's map of Europe and the Near East. Write the Society's headquarters, Washington 6, D. C., for a price list of maps.

See also, "Speaking of Spain," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for April, 1950; "A Skyline Drive in the Pyrenees," October, 1937*; "Turbulent Spain," October, 1936; "A Palette from Spain," March, 1936; "Pursuing Spanish Bypaths Northwest of Madrid," January, 1931; and the issue for March, 1929, which is entirely devoted to Spain. *(Issues marked with an asterisk are included on a special list of Magazines available to teachers in packets of ten for $1.00.)*



DRAWN BY E. J. HOWELL

SPAIN, SEALED OFF FROM FRANCE BY THE PYRENEES, HAS ONLY PORTUGAL AS A NEIGHBOR

Bulletin No. 3, April 3, 1950

Blockade Stifles Shanghai, Built on Trade

BUSINESSMEN of Shanghai, once the "shopping center" for one-eighth of the human race, were cheered recently when train connections were re-established with Hong Kong. The first train in a year, filled with Shanghai exports, reached the British port.

Since its fall to the Chinese communists, Shanghai has been tightly blockaded by the nationalist navy operating from Formosa. The great city, with a recently estimated population of 6,000,000, has consequently declined in commerce, wealth, and size.

Feared Japanese Pirates

After World War II, Britain, the United States, and France gave up their concessions which had made Shanghai an international city. Then Shanghai became completely Chinese for the first time since 1842. In that year the British started a trading settlement on the mud flats of what was then a mere fishing village.

The villagers had walled their town against Japanese pirates, exhibiting a fear which was to be realized a century later when Japan took Shanghai and held it till the end of World War II. The modern city grew up around the walled village. In time the wall and moat were removed and expansion began.

In less than 100 years the fishing village grew into one of the greatest cities the world has ever known. It became China's largest metropolis and the Orient's leading seaport. Yet it is not on the sea, but 13 miles up the Hwang Pu (Whangpoo) River from the estuary of the Yangtze River—China's main street. Shanghai means "up from the sea." In 1936 its population was almost 3,500,000.

Once Western methods of trade and development began, the city grew because of its geographical position. Shanghai is midway on the China coast. It is the gateway for the Yangtze valley. It is the nearest China port to Japan. It normally serves China's rich center, with rail, river, road, and canal connections to all China.

Born of trade, modern Shanghai's wealth is based also on industry. Plentiful labor helped make the metropolitan area almost equal to the rest of China in industrial production and in publishing.

Sidewalk Shops Line Narrow Streets

Great extremes of poverty and wealth were to be seen in the teeming city. Shanghai attracted many Chinese peasants who came in without definite jobs and became part of a drifting multitude. On the other hand, the city's 20-story hotels and luxury night clubs were always filled. Nine o'clock was the fashionable dinner hour. Western-style music and radios were popular.

Thousands of motor cars and trucks, innumerable rickshas, and an occasional horse-drawn victoria complicated the task of traffic officers on the narrow streets of the Chinese City. Sidewalk shops spilled into the stone-paved lanes.

UMI

boomerangs from blinds. Hopi Indians of the American southwest use an S-shaped throwing stick which they skim along the ground en route to its mark. Native boomeranglike weapons are known also in southern India and northern Africa.

Among various suggested sources of the word boomerang is "bumarin," used by Australia's Botany Bay tribe. Captain James Cook, in 1770, observed natives throwing it in the Botany Bay region where Sydney now stands. West Australians call it a "kiley." Tribes in Victoria throw the "wonguim."

NOTE: Melbourne and aborigine areas may be located on the Society's map of Australia.

For further information, see "An Arnhem Land Adventure," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for March, 1948; "Earth's Most Primitive People," February, 1946*; "Beyond Australia's Cities," December, 1936; and "Capital Cities of Australia," December, 1935.

See also, "Australia Deserts to Serve as Rocket Range" in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS for May 2, 1949; "New South Wales Shows the Way in Australia," April 4, 1949; and "Arnhem Land Expedition Reports Progress," October 4, 1948.

FATHER TEACHES SON TO THROW THE BOOMERANG—NEAR BROOME, AUSTRALIA

These aborigines use the bent-wood weapon for hunting, fighting, and sport. The man has painted his legs and body with white clay and decorated his chest with long scars.

Bulletin No. 4, April 3, 1950

King Cotton Follows Pioneer Trail West

KING COTTON has migrated but many of his subjects in Dixie do not mourn his departure.

Since World War I, when the high price of cotton first lured western landowners to allot many of their acres to the world's leading fiber plant, the useful crop has become more popular in the West while, at the same time, losing favor in the South.

Many Southern Plantations Abandon Cotton

Western cotton production has increased so greatly that in 1949 Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California raised 53 per cent of the year's crop of 16,000,000 bales produced by the entire country.

In the southern states, meanwhile, farmers are planting less than half as much cotton as they did two decades ago. Many former cotton plantations have shifted entirely to other crops. It took World War II and the global need for foodstuffs to break down the traditional one-crop system that for so long tied the South's welfare to the rise and fall of cotton prices.

Though cotton has been raised in the southern states since early colonial days, it was not until after Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1792 that the great cotton plantation developed. For decades it was to dominate southern life. Dixie became the top cotton-raising area of the world. It held first place until the havoc of the Civil War and reconstruction cost it its many markets abroad.

In 1949, in state after state across the so-called "cotton belt," southern farmers told the same story—cotton fields grew smaller, grain fields larger; more hogs, more cattle, more poultry were raised.

While cotton is still the South's biggest money crop, growers are finding that they can make more money from numerous other crops—and avoid possible eggs-in-one-basket disasters.

Machinery and Irrigation Speed Western Crops

The Louisiana sweet potato, for example, has climbed since 1933 to third place among the state's money-making crops. Arkansas, although still one of the three top cotton-producing states in the nation, is concentrating her cotton in the rich bottomlands of the Mississippi River, and giving over other lands to fruits, vegetables, hay, oats, and dairy herds. Mississippi raises beef cattle on ranches whose Western-style names bring visions of sagebrush and cowboys.

Western cotton farmers, with their modern machines and scientifically irrigated cotton fields, think that they have an opportunity to get more out of cotton than the Old South did. In the flat, dry regions of the western and southwestern United States, some growers are producing from four to five bales of cotton to an acre. By contrast, it is not unusual for a southern plantation to yield only from one-quarter of a bale to one bale per acre.

By using machines for every process from planting to picking, farmers in the West have discovered that they need only seven hours of labor for each acre producing cotton. When the work is done by hand (illustration,

In what was the International Settlement and the French Concession, large department stores rose, many owned by Chinese. The broad boulevard along the river front (illustration, below) was lined with big banking houses, office buildings, newspaper offices, the customhouse, and other Western-style buildings.

NOTE: Shanghai may be located on the Society's map of China.

For additional information, see "Along the Yangtze, Main Street of China," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for March, 1948; "Today on the China Coast," February, 1945*; "Grand Canal Panorama," April, 1937; "Coastal Cities of China," November, 1934; "Changing Shanghai," October, 1937*; and "Cosmopolitan Shanghai, Key Seaport of China," September, 1932.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, December 12, 1949, "Yangtze Divides Chinese Wheat, Rice Eaters"; and "China's Yangtze Now Divides, Not Unites," January 24, 1949.

W. ROBERT MOORE

EAST AND WEST MEET AT THE BUND. SAMPANS AND SKYSCRAPERS CROWD IT ON EITHER SIDE

Before Great Britain and the United States gave up their rights, after World War II, to this portion of Shanghai, it was the International Settlement—business and industrial heart of the Chinese port. Ocean steamers anchor elsewhere in the muddy Hwang Pu.

Bulletin No. 5, April 3, 1950

Syria-Lebanon Customs Union Breaks Down

SYRIA and Lebanon, two adjoining Arab League countries at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, have maintained close economic ties since both won complete independence in 1946. A customs union made border stops unnecessary for the transport of goods or persons from one country to the other. Now, amid a general breakdown of good relations, the customs union is dissolving as both lands are putting up border barriers.

What happens in Syria and Lebanon concerns the world because that Near East area of age-old caravan routes has been a crossroads throughout its entire civilized history. Today, as much as ever, the two lands are meeting points of international interests. They fill key spots on the land bridge where Europe, Africa, and Asia meet. On the north stretches Turkey; south lie Israel and Jordan; east is Iraq.

Conquerors Left Mark

For thousands of years tides of humanity have rolled across the deserts and mountains of Syria and Lebanon. Seafarers have set out in ships from their shores. Syrian Damascus, "the port of the desert," is believed to be the world's oldest inhabited city (illustration, inside cover). It is still one of the largest settlements of either Syria or Lebanon, with a 1943 population of 286,000. Syria's Aleppo (illustration, next page) is larger. Beirut, capital of Lebanon, is slightly smaller.

Phoenicians, Egyptians, Hittites, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Turks—among others—have left their mark on the land and people. On dusty plains Roman columns stand like skeletons. Ruined Crusaders' castles and ancient monasteries cling to rocky mountains. From the flat-topped roofs of the cities rise the mosques and minarets of Islam.

For centuries before the first World War the territory which now forms the republics of Syria and Lebanon belonged to the Turkish (Ottoman) Empire. In the postwar alignments, the League of Nations placed these areas under mandate to France, which had maintained religious, educational, and commercial ties there from the time of the Crusades.

Syria Larger Than New England

In 1941, the areas were occupied by combined British and Free French forces, in order to forestall potential German seizure. Later, French authorities granted the independence of Syria and Lebanon, while maintaining troops for the war's duration. The troops were removed in 1946.

Together, Syria and Lebanon cover an area of a little less than 70,000 square miles. Syria is slightly larger than New England, while Lebanon is smaller than Connecticut. Lebanon, a narrow coastal strip about 125 miles long, is only a patch beside the broad expanse of Syria, which reaches inland 350 miles. The latest estimate gave Lebanon almost 1,200,000 inhabitants. Syria, including Latakia and Jebel Ed Druz but not Turkey-ceded Hatay, has slightly more than 3,000,000.

Although the prevailing language is Arabic and the two nations belong to the Arab League, the people of Syria and Lebanon are varied. Samples include Bedouin sheiks of the desert, hard-riding nomad Turko-

UMI

below), it requires 22 hours. Use of these labor-saving devices makes it possible to grow a good deal more cotton for less money.

Western land, free from the boll weevil that has plagued the South, and relatively new or refreshed by crop rotation, thus could conceivably change the first line of the familiar old song to read "Way out West in the land of cotton."

NOTE: Areas of the United States where cotton is grown may be located on the Society's maps of the Southeastern United States, South Central United States, and Southwestern United States.

For additional information on cotton and the regions where it is grown, see "Around the 'Great Lakes of the South'," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for April, 1948; "Louisiana Trades with the World," December, 1947; "Arkansas Rolls Up Its Sleeves," September, 1946; "The Yield of Texas," February, 1945*; "How We Use the Gulf of Mexico," January, 1944*; "Cotton: Foremost Fiber of the World," February, 1941*; "Seeing Our Spanish Southwest," June, 1940; "Highlights of the Volunteer State," May, 1939; "Texas Delta of an American Nile," January, 1939*; and " Machines Come to Mississippi," September, 1937.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL SYSTEM

LIKE WEATHERPROOF SNOWBALLS, COTTON BOLLS PILE UP UNDER A BLAZING SUMMER SUN

In August the fields of the "Delta" region of western Mississippi are snow white with cotton. Hand picked, the fluffy fiber will be packaged under hydraulic pressure into bales about a yard and a half long, a yard and a quarter wide, and three-quarters of a yard thick. Weighing about 500 pounds, the steel-tied packs will occupy about half the space of their natural bulk.

The following order form may be used (or copied) for requesting the BULLETINS: School Service Department, National Geographic Society, Washington 6, D. C.

Kindly send ..... copies of the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS weekly for one school year for classroom use to

Address for sending BULLETINS .....

City ..... State .....

I enclose, for each subscription, 25 cents (in United States or its possessions; in Canada, 50 cents in U. S. Funds): Total amount .....

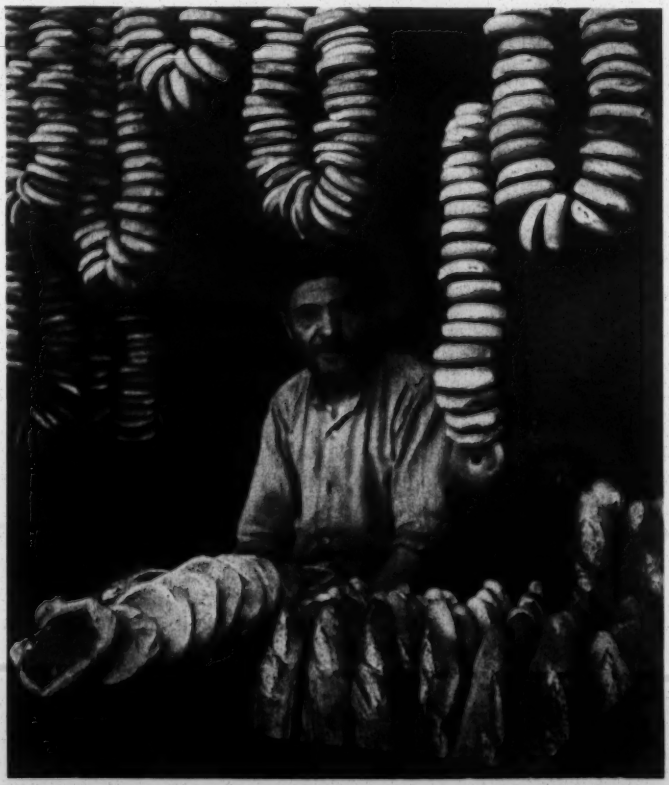
mans, Kurdish settlers by the banks of the Euphrates, French colonials, Circassians, Armenians, Turks, Americans, Egyptians, and Greeks.

Religions are equally mixed. In addition to several rival Mohammedan sects, including the Alawis and mysterious Druses, there are Hebrews, and Christians of Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Greek Orthodox churches. Lebanon, where most of the Christians are concentrated, is rated the only predominantly Christian state of Asia.

In their land of desert wastes and forest-covered mountains, of fertile valleys and rich oases, the people of Syria and Lebanon produce wool, cereals, olive oil, fruits, silk, cotton, goatskins, carpets, and other handicraft work. Normally, however, they import more than they export, including the intangible imports of Western ways that are changing life in Syria and Lebanon as in other parts of the Near East.

NOTE: Syria and Lebanon are shown on the Society's map of Bible Lands and the Cradle of Western Civilization.

For further information, see "Syria and Lebanon Taste Freedom," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for December, 1946; "American Alma Maters in the Near East," August, 1945*; "Change Comes to Bible Lands," December, 1938; "Road of the Crusaders," December, 1933; and "Crusader Castles of the Near East," March, 1931; and, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, December 5, 1949, "Lebanon Plans to Prevent Cedars' Extinction"; "Americans Leave Impress on Lebanon," January 3, 1949; and "Oil Line May Revive Sidon's Ancient Trade," October 27, 1947.



MAYNARD OWEN WILLIAMS

AN ALEPPO BAKER DISPLAYS DOUGHNUT-SHAPED HARDTACK AND LONG FRENCH LOAVES